

take me out (the murder way)

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by [orphan_account](#)

Summary

Expect Dream to perfectly time his entrance when George was sipping his coffee so he could walk in and say *hi*, causing George to choke and, as a result, die so he could eliminate George as competition in the office. Who says *hi* to each other in the morning?

“We do. Normal people. Friends,” Sapnap slowly blinks at him. “And coworkers. You guys literally say hi to each other every morning.”

George blinks back. “I have never willingly spoken to him in my life.”

(Being enemies, it was expected for Dream to make a few attempts on George's life. This being said, George was a little confused as to why the rest of their coworkers think they're in love with each other, and why Sapnap keeps calling him an idiot.)

Notes

disclaimer: if anyone in this fic expresses any discomfort to being in it, i will gladly delete this and also myself

cw - there a lot of jokes about dying/possibly dying/murder jokes that are all light-hearted, and are meant to be seen as surface-level jokes, and nothing more :) if this bothers you, i would suggest clicking off !

thank u very much to [ari \(noodlewrenn\)](#), [enon](#), [rinny](#), and [ari \(ethmaron\)](#) for betaing this fic !!! genuinely i appreciate them so much, please check out their own, individual works :)

>[if u would like to listen to the playlist](#)

happy reading!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Today is the worst day of George's life.

One would consider this a rather extreme statement, as it would mean reigning victory over the third and second worst days of his life, which was quite the difficult feat. Still, George can say, with all conviction, that today is most definitely the worst.

– The third worst day was back in college, when Marissa from his calculus class had shyly asked him out on a date in front of more than a couple of people. George had immediately panicked, as he does, and, with the volume of a megaphone, exclaimed, *Sorry, I'm not into girls*, embarrassing both her and George.

(The reason why this was the third worst day was *not* because he had abruptly come out in front of his classmates, but the fact he had dated Jennie, Marissa's sister, for three months, broken up with her two weeks ago, and found out about his interest in guys just a few seconds ago. Bad timing on everyone's part, here.)

George's second worst day had been the day he had met Sapnap, which in itself was a reason. It had also been one of George's best days because he had met Sapnap, so really, it was a balance.

But out of these two, George thinks, today takes the cake, watching as Dream took the one and only jelly-filled donut from the box, and some unnaturally logical part of him wonders if he's being dramatic.

Niki has just gotten donuts for the entire office, which is very kind of her, as it's her one-year anniversary of joining Meadow Mods, their software company. The company really is quite popular, and it wasn't a lie to say that George looks *forward* to coming to work. He'd always been a fan of coding, and he can easily say going through university with Sapnap for his computer science degree was worth it. He likes working here.

What George does not like, however, is Dream.

"I hate him," he tells Sapnap, like he always does, that Tuesday afternoon when he rolls over to him on his office chair. It's a good chair – soft, rolls around without much noise, and, if Karl's outbursts of abuse to his own, same-brand chair were anything to go by, it could also withstand a lot. Not that any of this matters, as Dream also owns the same chair, and, by association, this chair is immediately dead to him.

(Someone might point out the fact *everyone* in the office has the same chair, and to that, George must say he simply does not give a fuck.)

"I'd ask what he did this time, but you're gonna tell me anyways," Sapnap sighs, taking a long sip from his mug, which reads *Best Grandma* in red letters. Dream had bought it for him. George hates the fact that it's kind of funny.

George frantically waves to both the table holding the donuts, out for display, and then to Dream, who, completely oblivious, shoves the entire donut in his mouth in one go, chewing for a few moments before swallowing. This has both Sapnap and George pause, before George shrieks, "*See?*"

"He's got a big mouth," Sapnap observes, nodding as if that had been George's point all along.

George short circuits. "He— *no!* I meant the donut, you *dumbass.*"

Sapnap shrugs, easygoing. "I don't know, dude, there's still, like, thirty donuts left. Just get a glazed one."

George ignores this, like he does with most things. “He had to have known jelly-filled is my favorite,” he huffs, placing his head in his hands, devastated. “I told everyone so last year when Niki brought donuts for her first day.”

“I don’t remember what I did five minutes ago, and you think Dream remembers your favorite donut from a year ago?” Sapnap raises his eyebrows, and yeah, okay. When he says it like that, he does sound a little ridiculous. Maybe George should reconsider his accusations. It *was* a year ago, after all.

He reconsiders nothing. “He’s out to get me.”

Sapnap indulges him. “Is a donut all you’ve got on him?”

George quickly shakes his head. “No, alright, this morning, he said *hi* to me,” he recalls with much somber, slightly traumatized.

It had been terrible; George had walked into the office, slightly drowsy from a night of bingeing nature documentaries that he had no legitimate interest in, but awake from the coffee he had bought that morning.

George was mid-sip when Dream, the asshole he is, walked in a few seconds later, looking absolutely terrible in a white dress shirt, sleeves rolled up and hair parted neatly. He’d looked up from his phone, grinned his supermodel smile, raised his right hand, and cheerfully said *Hi!*

George, composed as ever, had choked on his drink and nearly died.

Expect Dream to perfectly time his entrance when George was sipping his coffee so he could walk in and say hi, causing George to choke and, as a result, die so he could eliminate George as competition in the office. Who says *hi* to each other in the morning?

“We do. Normal people. Friends,” Sapnap slowly blinks at him. “And *coworkers*. You guys literally say hi to each other every morning.”

George blinks back. “I have never willingly spoken to him in my life.” He immediately trashes any memory of them exchanging any words, ever. “Sap, he’s trying to kill me.”

Sapnap downs the rest of his coffee, nearly chokes, and recovers by clearing his throat. “I feel like you’re being just a little dramatic.”

Before George could articulate how, in fact, it was *not* him being dramatic, and that Dream *is* plotting to murder him, Sam, the new guy they hired a few weeks ago, calls out, “Hey, Sapnap!”, and George watches with an open mouth as Sapnap leaves him behind for Sam without as much as a glance back.

Traitor.

He is solemn in his own lonesomeness when he scoots back to his own desk, littered with papers and blue sticky notes, one that he unsticks from a pen, which says, in bold, green Sharpie, “*is*”, followed by a squarish smiley face. He’s not quite sure why, but his brain is too occupied to try and figure it out. Half of him mourns the loss of the dessert that had been in the clutches of his hands, and the other half is trying to find his folder from yesterday.

George stares at it, before it clicks. Pen-is. *Penis*.

God. He hates Quackity.

Groaning, he tosses the pen aside, all too fed up with the day. In all clarity, George isn't all that surprised— after all, he and Dream were *enemies*. He'd established it the day Dream had first been hired, when George was the second person to have met him in the entire Meadow Mods company.

It would make sense, as they met the second Dream stepped into the office and walked into George, who had been carrying a stack of papers to storage. Maybe it could be considered cliché in the way George had dropped all his papers and quickly scrambled to pick them up, but Dream had stood there like a *jerk*, unmoving and completely unhelpful as George did his best to pick everything up before he imploded.

After all his papers were in his arms once again, folders being cradled like a first-born baby, George had looked Dream in the eyes and, in front of the entire office, proclaimed them enemies for life. Dream had blinked in return, smiled lopsidedly, looking *good*, and George took that personally.

He still takes it personally. He takes Dream personally. He needs to stop thinking.

George is not alone with his thoughts for long, however, as he is digging a folder out of his cabinet, scowl on his face and eyebrows furrowed because the folder won't *fucking budge under the pile*, when a shadow overtakes him and he looks up to see the Devil himself.

Dream.

Dream, who unfortunately seems to not have changed from how good— no, how *terrible* he had looked this morning. If anything, he seems to have gotten worse, with a few strands of hair lightly brushing his forehead and into his eyes. Goddamn it.

He's holding another donut.

"Are you here to flaunt your victory in front of me?" George asks, slowly retrieving his hand from his endless cabinet. The folder can wait; there's a donut involved, now.

"Victory?" Dream quirks an eyebrow, smile playing at his lips. There always seems to be a smile on his face whenever George is forced into conversation with him. Like he enjoys torturing George. In a non-weird way.

He gestures to the donut. "You got the last good one." George tries not to sound heartbroken. He's not sure if it works.

Dream's stupid smile seems to widen at the words. "There were two of them, you know."

That was even worse. "So you've come here to eat the second one in front of me like a war criminal," George puts together. "Expected. Go ahead." He leans back in his chair, and stares.

Dream seems to flounder under George's gaze. "That's not why I— what?" He does a double take, and shakes his head. He laughs a little, and his teeth show, eyes crinkle upwards, and shoulders move slightly, because his whole body seems to be engulfed in happiness when he laughs. Laughter, for Dream, was a movement. "That's not why I brought it over! Have a little faith," he grins, and places the donut on the desk, on top of the napkin he had held it in.

"What," George says.

"It's for you! I was getting my own, and there was only one jelly donut left, so I thought I'd just bring it over to you, in case someone else grabbed it," he explains, and then tilts his head toward the donut. "It's yours."

George squints at Dream, then the donut, and back. “Why would you do that,” he replies flatly, more than mildly skeptical.

He pegs it as suspicious when red crawls up Dream’s neck and onto his cheeks, furthering to his ears when he stumbles to say, “Because you like jelly donuts?” It’s an answer, yet Dream responds as a question. Still, he said it quite simply, and maybe it was simple. It would be simple to any normal person.

That was assuming George is a normal person.

To George, this— there had to be a *plan*. An ulterior motive of sorts, something that definitely urged Dream to walk over and give this to him, knowing full well George is a fan of jelly donuts, as he had decreed exactly a year ago. People don’t remember details like that about coworkers, but they do remember details like that about *enemies*.

Enemies that are wanted *dead*.

Perhaps this is the second move; after choking didn’t kill him, Dream had to take matters into his own hands and properly poison him.

That must be it.

“Did you poison this?” He asks, accusatory and possibly also loudly, as three different heads look at the two of them. They both ignore them. “Did you? If I take a bite and die, I want everyone to know it was you who did it.” George is entirely serious. He says just so. “I’m serious. I’m going to die and then haunt you for the entirety of my afterlife. If you poisoned this, now is the time to heroically smack it out of my hand.”

He waits a few seconds, donut inches away from his mouth, and Dream still has a smile on his face, not a trace of worry present. George has a half a mind to wonder if killing him is worth going to jail. Probably.

“You’d be a good ghost, though,” Dream replies, pocketing his hand, and he tilts his head. It would be charming if it were anyone else. Maybe it is a little charming. Whatever.

“I’d turn on all your faucets while you’re asleep,” George tells him. “Your water bill would be through the roof.” He looks at the donut, and then at Dream, debating, before he simply decides the donut to be too enticing. If he dies, he dies. “You’d hate me.”

“I didn’t poison it, in case you were actually asking,” Dream clarifies, just when he takes a small bite of the donut. George slowly chews, feeling Dream’s eyes on him as he swallows. Seconds pass of silence, besides the white noise of everyone else slowly clocking in for the day. No one spares any notice to them, used to their antics.

“Perhaps you didn’t,” George resolves. “Or maybe I’ll die when I’m getting ready for bed. Just so there’s been so much time passed that no one would suspect you.”

“Maybe,” Dream agrees easily. “I sound like a really good murderer, if I did do that.”

“It would be entirely unsurprising.” George takes another bite, and ignores the weird feeling in stomach, something warm and kind of happy. It’s probably the poison. “You’ve got the aura of someone who definitely has a dark side. Don’t worry,” he says at Dream’s concerned expression, “people find it attractive.”

“‘People’?” Dream seems suddenly much more interested, hand resting on George’s desk. He leans

a little closer, and George doesn't notice. At all. If he does notice, it is merely because his personal space is being invaded. He's going to sweat, at this rate. He could blame it on the poison.

"Yeah, 'people'." George rolls his eyes, trying not to lean away. Did he really not know? "Half the people on the floor below us have a crush on you. They think you're mysterious because they only know you as Dream," he explains, referring to the fact that Dream's real name is unbeknownst to a few of their coworkers. "Also because of that one time you wore fingerless gloves on Halloween and used their printer with them on because ours was broken. Blake talked about it for an entire week."

He's too surprised for George's liking. Really, it makes sense for a lot of people to have a crush on Dream—he's young, smart, attractive (if anyone besides George was asked), and good with people; a formula for a perfect office crush. At least, he would be, by George's standards, and his standards were quite high he would say—although, at the moment, all of his standards were essentially being met, but he tries not to think about that.

"Oh." Dream furrows his eyebrows, before brightening. "Do you think I'm mysterious?"

"I saw you cry during *Inside Out*," George tells him blandly. "You have no mystery left."

Dream seems pleased when he chuckles. "I didn't think you'd remember that!"

"I remember everything," George says darkly. He almost adds *about you*, but he would rather combust into confetti than admit that. Keep friends close, enemies closer, they say, and George lives by that.

"I remember you liking jelly-filled donuts from a year ago, so I think we're even," Dream replies easily, leaning away from his desk. George squints at him. They were definitely not even.

Dream retreats to his desk after that, and leaves George alone to finish his donut, which he does. It's a very good donut, one he would enjoy much more if not for the looming threat of him being poisoned. If he does die, George is glad it's on these terms.

Still, poisoned or not, Dream offering a donut, one that he *knows* is George's favorite, is awfully suspicious. They were enemies—George hates him, and a donut does not change this.

When Sapnap comes back from a long conversation with Sam about—whatever Texan people talked about, George turns to him, donut no longer present in his hands.

"Sapnap," George announces direly, jam smeared in the corner of his mouth, "Dream is plotting to kill me."

It's one of the many late nights George spends after hours when it happens again.

It wasn't unlike him to stay behind an hour or so to finish a new project, sometimes too caught up on correcting his own work that he'd rather not leave. The extra time spent often did pay off, too, because as much as George likes to fool around with Quackity or spend a few minutes hating how broad Dream's shoulders looked, he's *good* at his job.

Paired with the fact he did his best work alone, away from the usual ruckus of their office, where most had to work alongside the chaos that comes with coworkers like Karl, Quackity, and essentially their entire firm, George found himself staying late often. Not that he minded the

ridiculousness of their firm, of course—he wouldn't have it any other way, but the quietness of the after hours is a nice change from time to time.

That is not to mention the fact George is a night owl of sorts, and often worked better when it was dark. He, for all that he is socially adaptable and friendly, prefers the solidarity that comes when everyone else heads home, save for the handful of others who are alike to him in this way.

One of those people is Dream, it seems, when George looks up from his work for the first time in hours. He's met with the sight of Dream, his face dimly-lit by the glow of the screen.

His eyebrows are slightly furrowed, a thin line traced between them and a small, concentrated frown on his face as he types away. George would almost say he looks good, with his hair brushed away from his face, a few strands falling back onto his forehead when he sighs and leans forward. George would only confess this, however, at gunpoint, and hesitantly even then.

George forces himself to look away, and continue his own work.

It's some time later when he starts to yawn into his own hand, blinking blearily as the letters on the screen begin to blur together, that George would say that he's tired. His own fucked up sleep schedule did sync up from time to time to have him falling asleep at a decent hour on occasion every blue moon.

Maybe his yawning is more obvious than he thought, however, as Dream looks up from his own desk, where he had slowly been packing up a few minutes ago. His tie is a little looser around his neck than it had been earlier that day, and he's shouldering his bag when he meets George's eye.

"Tired?" He asks, looking amused as he raises an eyebrow. George hates how attractive it is, and plans out a murder scheme.

"I've no idea what you're talking about," he says very confidently, the effect ruined when a yawn breaks in the middle of his sentence. Dream gives a little giggle at it, and George ignores the weird flutter in his stomach. He's probably having a heart attack.

Dream zips up his bag. "Aren't you going to head home any time soon?"

"I mean," George leans back in his chair and looks at his screen, rubbing an eye as he tries to blink the sleep away. He's done more than enough for the day, and the weekend is so tempting to immediately give in to. He thinks of his cat at home, definitely waiting to jump into George's face and demand attention for the rest of the evening.

"I think I'm done," he reluctantly admits, and gets up to stretch. He winces when his back makes an unnaturally loud noise as he bends, sighing in relief when he lets his arms drop, and tugs his shirt back down from where it had risen up. George turns to Dream, whose eyes immediately drop when he looks over, slightly pink in the face. Suspicious.

He waits as he watches George pack up, already ready when he lingers by the door. Neither of them mention it as George grabs his keys and begins to walk with him.

"Is your car repaired yet?" Dream asks conversationally when they're both exiting the office and stepping into the elevator, and George is too tired to properly figure out what motive he has to ask.

He shakes his head, somewhat tiring at the mere thought of having to walk home. "Not until Thursday."

Dream furrows his eyebrows, looking more concerned than he has the right to. "You're walking

home, then?”

“Unless the bus schedule decided to change today of all days, yeah,” George mumbles, tapping on his phone to confirm he has definitely missed the bus, goddamn it. George isn’t— *unathletic*, of course, he’s played enough football, or *soccer*, as Americans like to call it, and he’s taken the occasional annual jog. Sue him if he didn’t want to walk home in the dark on a Friday evening.

A silence follows as they both stand in the elevator, a foot apart as Dream fiddles with the strap of his satchel, until, looking anywhere but George, he offers, “I could give you a ride, if you’d like.”

George blinks. And blinks again, just to process what he said. “What?”

“I mean, if you want, I didn’t— I just assumed a ride might be more preferable than a walk, and it’s getting pretty dark too, so I was going to— yeah,” he lamely finishes, and half of George almost laughs at the resigned expression on his face when he lets his hands drop to his sides. He looks defeated. Good.

There is the possibility of this being another attempt on George’s life; a car ride is the perfect diversion to get him in Dream’s car, where he would be in *control*, and then possibly lead George far, far away where no one would be able to hear his screams as he was getting brutally stabbed multiple times in the vital arteries in the middle of the woods.

On the other hand, George *really* didn’t want to walk.

So, with the contentedness that comes with accepting death, George replies, “Okay.”

“I— okay?” Dream looks alarmingly surprised, but then schools his expression to one of faux-coolness. “Yeah, okay. Alright, nice.” He clears his throat, rolling his shoulders back. “Cool. Great. Nice.”

“You said ‘nice’ already,” George points out when they step out of the elevator. Bad had already left, leaving the front desk unattended as they leave the lobby.

Dream laughs, bright and uncontainable, and George ignores the warm feeling that’s slowly rising in his stomach. His body is feeling weird today. He should probably get it checked out.

Dream is right about it rapidly becoming dark, the sky already the inky purple of night when they walk out of the building. The doors shut behind them, and suddenly, George is very aware of it being just them in the quiet, empty street. Perfect for crime.

He follows the other as Dream leads them to his car, gesturing to it with no amount of modesty. “Here she is,” he says with much gusto, the chirp of the car interrupting the silence of the street.

“‘She’? You’re one of those people who name their car, aren’t you?” George accuses as he slides into the passenger seat, not one bit of him surprised. He himself was never one for cars— he wouldn’t be able to figure out what type of car this is if his life depended on it.

“I have no idea what you mean.” George watches Dream’s face turn pink, and it’s kind of cute, in a very bad way. In a very, very, very bad way, where George wants to puke and not look at it ever again. “I don’t— I don’t do that.”

George raises a singular eyebrow, the rest of his face flat when he looks at the other man. “Sure.”

“I *don’t*,” Dream insists, turning on the car and onto the road.

“I believe you,” George says, buckling in his seatbelt and leaning back, although not completely relaxed. One never knows when Dream might take one wrong turn and lead George out of this city and into an abandoned part of the neighboring woods. He’d have to stay on high alert this entire ride.

He still couldn’t figure out why Dream was offering— they were *enemies*. Mortal enemies, where George would give Dream up in return for a piece of bread. If offered the chance, George would simply push Dream into a volcano and walk away with a clean conscience.

Even so, George finds himself relaxing, despite having to be on high alert, as he tells Dream where to take right turns and finds himself laughing every time Dream cracks a stupid joke. Out of politeness, of course. It isn’t like George finds Dream *funny* or *charming* or anything. In fact, George finds him incredibly annoying. He hates the stupid smile that Dream has before opening his mouth to quip back a smart reply, or the fact that he starts to laugh before finishing his joke. It’s annoying and George wants to smack him with an Economics textbook.

Before he knows it, they’re in front of George’s home, Dream’s car parked in the driveway. He’d left his front porch’s light on, and George could see his cat’s face pushed against the window, anticipating his arrival.

“You have a cat?” Dream asks, seemingly surprised when he catches sight of his cat, gray fur pressed against the glass.

George nods, unbuckling his seatbelt. “Yeah, also a dog, but she’s with my mother.” Why he decided to release personal information about him to his sworn enemy, he didn’t know, but here he was.

“I have a cat, too,” Dream grins, “Patches.”

“I didn’t know you had a cat,” George raises his eyebrows. Anyone who owns a cat couldn’t be all that bad, probably. Although most supervillains in movies seem to only own cats, but still.

“Yeah! I got her a few years back, she’s the best,” Dream nods. “You should,” he pauses, before deciding to continue the rest of his sentence, “meet her sometime.”

George’s brain freezes. He would never miss out on a chance to meet another cat, but then again, it would be at *Dream’s* home— Dream, his worst enemy.

Not like George had many enemies, besides that one Tesco employee who gave him a weird look when he bought eight bottles of apple juice in one go. He likes apple juice, sue him.

“If I ever end up in your home,” he begins, “it would be for your cat, and your cat only. You being there would simply be a formality.”

“I completely understand,” Dream responds, and he looks like he’s trying to hold back a smile, which is not endearing at all. “Would having dinner together also be a formality?”

“With the cat present the entire time, I might consider it,” George replies, a weird feeling of warmth crawling up his neck and to his cheeks. He’s thankful that the street is dark, the closest streetlight being a few meters away. He would never live it down if Dream could see him *blushing*.

Not that he was blushing. He probably had a fever. He might be dying. Hopefully.

“Already implied, of course,” Dream nods, and his face splits into a smile. George spares a fleeting look at him, already hurrying out of the car before he starts to smile back like a loser.

"Thanks for the ride," he announces loudly, grabbing his bag and shutting the door behind him before Dream has a chance to respond.

Nonetheless, when he's quickly opening his front door, he hears a burst of laughter and a cheerful, "Anytime!"

Something warm blooms in his chest.

George really needs to get that checked out.

Despite the many terrible choices he has made in his life (see: above), George could be considered a smart person.

He's quick with maths, was generally pretty good in school, tutored other kids from time to time when he was able, and had a keen ability with difficult logic and problem solving. Maybe that is why it only takes these two events for George to piece it together.

Dream is attempting to murder him.

Now, one might call him ridiculous, but he has *connected* the dots; the donut, the specific type of donut that Dream *knew* George would be unable to resist, had turned out to be unpoisoned, sure. This did not mean anything, however, because this was simply him building George's trust, and therefore allowing future scenarios in which Dream offers him food, until one day George has let his guard down completely. That will be the day when he foolishly accepts Dream's offer, and then *dies* because he forgot they were enemies.

The ride home was also a mere attempt to have George trust Dream alone. Maybe he did not get brutally murdered by twelve stab wounds to his vital organs, but one could not expect much from a man. It would only be a matter of time when George accepts another ride home, unassuming when Dream takes a right turn where he should take a left, and then leaving him to die in an abandoned patch of woods.

See, George is a man of unrelenting logic, and logic has yet to fail him. The evidence is *there*.

"For such a smart person," Sapnap starts, "you sure are the dumbest motherfucker."

George frowns. "He's going to kill me and you're going to have to deal with the fact that I saw this coming and you did not," he sniffs, crossing his arms and leaning back in his chair. "He's probably going to leave my body for the wolves, and then you'll have to come down to the police station and identify my torn up body."

Sapnap blinks slowly. "I think he's the one who wants to tear up your body."

"By murdering me," George puts together.

"I meant by boning you."

George pauses. "He's going to remove the flesh from my bones? I didn't peg him as a cannibal, Sapnap."

Sapnap heaves a long, long sigh. "You," he begins, before seemingly deciding that this is not a conversation he wants to have, and instead settles to simply place his face in his hands. George

watches as he slowly pulls out his phone, takes one long look at him, and begins to text someone rapidly.

Sometimes he wonders if he's the only one in this office with brains. How no one else knew the limitless barriers of Dream's supervillain-planning is beyond him, because frankly, it's quite obvious to him. No one is so good looking, nice, *and* considerate without being a serial killer.

The clock soon reads for a lunch break, and George momentarily pauses his work for food. He adjusts his posture, knowing fully well his back is a replica of a Pringle, and ignores this for the sake of getting out of this building. George likes his job, sure, but he isn't going to spend any longer here than he has to.

"Aren't you coming?" He pauses, looking back at Sapnap, who still types away on his phone.

He glances up, before shaking his head. "I've got plans with Karl." George waits, and when the other doesn't offer any further explanation, he sighs, shoulders falling as he turns away. Of course Sapnap would ditch him for his technically-but-not-officially-or-else-they-would-have-to-fill-out-paperwork-from-HR boyfriend.

Usually, he spends his lunch break in Sapnap's company, possibly with Quackity's as well, on the few times their schedules line up. He likes having someone else to eat lunch with, since it feels embarrassing, sometimes, to eat alone involuntarily. It's much too reminiscent of his friends all being absent on the same day and him sitting all alone at school, eating his lunch like a loser.

In need of some sort of distraction so as to not look like an entire loner, he pulls out his phone. He checks his phone for anything new, if only to seem busy, and doesn't notice when he walks headfirst into something annoyingly taller, broader, and bigger than him. George did not realize brick walls were living creatures, as one seemed to have walked right in front of him.

"What the fuck," he says politely.

"Hi," Dream responds, slightly pink in the face. It's incredibly suspicious. Dream is often very suspicious. He has no idea how no one else is noticing this, someone seriously needs to stage an intervention.

He takes a step away from being face first into Dream's chest, after getting a thorough whiff of his cologne. "Hi."

"It's," Dream begins, "lunchtime."

"Your observations continuously astound me," George dryly replies, and watches Dream crack a smile. "No, really, you're brilliant. How in the world do you do it."

Dream is laughing when he responds with joking humility, "Thank you, George. I know, but it just hits so much harder coming from you." His words are somewhat submerged in his own laughter when he speaks, lost in the giggles bubbling up his throat. It's not endearing at all. Irritating, in fact. George finds Dream incredibly irritating.

He, before his own thoughts get carried away, asks, "Was there something?"

Dream fumbles. "Yeah, actually, I— was wondering," he starts, clearing his throat, "because you usually eat with Sap, and he's got a date with Karl or whatever, I was hoping if you'd like to," he gestures with his hands wildly, and George can't even pretend to know what he means.

"If I'd like to what?" He asks patiently. Kind of impatiently. George is *hungry*, and these are

precious minutes spent away from his lunch at the local sushi restaurant.

“If you’d like to have lunch together?” Dream tentatively asks, shoving his own, fidgeting hands into his pockets, and it would take no genius to know he is hesitant in this fashion, although George really is no short of being a genius, obviously. “Only if you want, of course,” Dream adds, “no pressure.”

George takes a second to consider. Clearly, this could be another ruse to have an attempt on his life, but at this point, George might as well give in, with how persistent Dream is with his attempted murdering. It’s also an opportunity to not look like a lonely twenty-four year old who involuntarily eats lunch all alone.

“Yeah, alright,” he accepts.

Dream freezes, and George can see the visible hope rising in the other’s eyes. It’s kind of cute. *Not*. He has no idea where that thought came from. “You— really?”

“Really,” he confirms, raising his eyebrows. Dream always seems surprised each time he accepts any offer of his, and half of him aches at the curiosity of wanting to know why. “You get to pay, though.”

“Okay!” Dream accepts more easily than expected, and moves to the side of the hallway, gesturing with a hand in great flourish. “Do you have a place in mind?”

Unfortunately, lunch with Dream is delightful.

They, surprisingly, have more in common than expected when they converse over food, whether it be in their food choices or in their choices of video games, although Dream, he learns disappointingly, likes avocado. One of the many reasons why they are mortal enemies.

Dream, George finds with a terrible feeling of dread, is nice company, and he does not like that at all. It’s in the fact that he’s funny in a way that it makes the conversation flow smoother than George would like to admit, and, oddly enough, there is no awkwardness when they both eat, even if he catches Dream staring at him more times than he can count, undoubtedly plotting something.

“You know, I don’t even like sushi,” he tells George when he finishes chewing on a roll, which George had picked out for him from the menu because of the other man’s lack of sushi knowledge. The only sushi Dream had ever tried, upsettingly, had been store-bought sushi, which he had hesitantly informed him of when they had walked on the way here. George had lost years off his lifespan at the news.

“But you’re eating it right now,” George reasons. “You said it was the best thing you’ve ever eaten in your life five minutes ago. You came here knowing it’s a sushi place. With sushi. Where we would be eating sushi. I don’t—”

“I mean,” Dream laughs, “I thought I didn’t like sushi, but you said it was your favorite, so I was like, if George likes it so much, it’s probably good, and it was just the store-bought ones I bought that were bad.”

“You knew you didn’t like sushi, but came anyway just because I wanted to?” George raises his eyebrows, and tries to ignore how he was getting warm over sushi.

This is not as heartfelt as he thinks it is. Dream spending his lunch with George, eating something

he doesn't like because he knows how much George likes it is not a sweet gesture. Really, if anything, it's a stupid gesture. Dream is stupid. What kind of idiot willingly eats food they don't like for lunch?

"Well, yeah!" Dream fiddles with the chopsticks in his right hand, which is, George notices with a terrible, terrible, terrible feeling in his stomach, big enough to make them look smaller than they are. He has large hands. Better to brutally stab him with, no doubt. There are absolutely no other thoughts going through George's head right now. "I thought, you know, if you like it, I'll probably like it, too."

George takes a long, long look at Dream.

"You're dumb," he states, and goes back to eating, forcefully not noticing the laughter bubbling up in Dream when he says so. He's going to have heart palpitations if he does. Maybe that was Dream's plan the entire time, the criminal mastermind.

When they pay and exit the restaurant, they walk back together, and George ignores how close they are. His heart would fare better if he simply ignores half the things happening right now, like them eating lunch together. Dream's weird sushi confession. The fact Dream is still, definitely, trying to kill him. Obviously.

"Do you," Dream's voice brings George out of his thoughts, "want to have lunch together again? Maybe tomorrow?"

George squints at him, eyes darting from his face to his fiddling hands, and considers.

Regrettably, lunch with Dream was nice. Enjoyable. He would rather die than admit that, but it *was*, and much more appealing than spending his lunch third-wheeling as Sapnap and Karl flirt right next to him. Having lunch with him again is much more than enticing, even with the looming threat of getting murdered.

"You can pick tomorrow," he says instead of a proper yes, because somehow it feels less like a confirmation on his part and more like an acceptance that it's happening.

The bright grin Dream sends his way after is entirely too much for him to consider it to be directed at him. Besides, he reasons, they're *enemies*. There's no possibility Dream is looking forward to having lunch with him. It is simply because he was happy about the prospect of being able to inconvenience George's life even more.

Because, despite the happy expression clearly worn on his face when they keep walking, when Dream begins to ramble about nothing in particular, when they walk into their building together, he's inconveniencing George. His lunch tomorrow is undoubtedly going to be terrible, which was surely Dream's goal all along. Because they are enemies.

Enemies, who hate each other.

"I can't wait for tomorrow!" Dream chirps when they part, George walking over to his own desk while Dream heads to another room.

I hate him, George tells himself when he catches himself watching Dream walk away.

They're enemies.

Right.

There is a guy in a tight button up standing next to George against the wall, looking at him through hooded, drunken eyes. He has a yellow shirt on. Or maybe it's green. Either way, it's ugly. George has never been a fan of green.

"I've never seen you around here before," the man attempts to flirt, hiccupping through his sentence.

Good, George wants to say, and instead takes a moment to quickly walk away without a response.

He hates it here.

Sure, there's some delight to be found when Quackity inevitably convinces Karl to do shitty karaoke with him and promptly gets both of them kicked out for being too obnoxious, but really, George would just like to be at *home*.

George is no hermit, even if Sapnap would thoroughly disagree. He does social outings sometimes, and has enough friends. By definition, he definitely isn't the least sociable person around, even if most of his time outside of work was spent at home than anywhere else.

And, with the sweating and clumsy drunkenness of clubs, no one could blame him when he can say he hates being here. George didn't *hate* clubs, really, his history of frequenting them so often in college could vouch, but on this Friday night, he would rather be at home.

It's just that the club is so *loud*, cramped, and all around not a fun time unless he was too drunk to focus on such things. Unfortunately, George couldn't indulge himself like this when he knew the consequence of drinking until he couldn't walk straight, a heavy hangover to follow the next morning. It isn't worth it tonight.

Of course, however, the rest of his coworkers just were quick to disagree, because here he is, watching as the rest of his friends progressively got drunker, under the guise of celebrating Sapnap's second year working with Meadow Mods, even though his anniversary is two weeks away.

No one else is complaining, though, because apparently George is the only one who would rather stay home than get shoved around in a crowd of sweaty bodies, packed together like sardines. He hates sardines. They were small and oily and he would rather be eating anything else, preferably in the comfort of his own home.

He moves over to the bar, sitting on a spinning chair as he asks the bartender for a Coca-Cola, which was, unfortunately, the only non-alcoholic drink he could think of at the moment. The music is so unbearably loud. George can't spot any of his friends. Leaving his friends and walking home in the middle of the night is looking so tempting.

"You look like you're having fun," someone tells him when they sit in the seat next to him, and George turns to kindly tell them to fuck *off*, before being met with the sight of Dream, who looks nicer than he should right now, because he's an asshole like that. Unlike everyone else in close proximity, he was *not* sweaty, unfortunately, but instead looking Really Good in a button up and glassy eyes, bright in the flashy club lights. George hates it.

George hates a lot of things, he is realizing. His frown deepens.

"I do not like being here."

“Not a fan of social gatherings?” Dream asks, spinning in his own chair slightly. Their knees bump.

George shakes his head, chewing on his inner cheek. “I’m not a fan of clubs. Too much—everything. People and music. And sweat. It’s not the most favorable.”

“It isn’t,” he agrees, smiling. “I saw Sapnap attempting to make out with a plate of fries, though, if that helps.”

“How would that help,” he questions, although a small grin makes its way to his face. “That’s disgusting.”

Dream chuckles as he shrugs, hands coming up with his shoulders. “I don’t know, it was pretty funny! He had, like, ketchup *everywhere*.”

“Gross,” George laughs, trying to smother it with a hand, and Dream grins at the sight.

They’re both light with laughter, elbows bumping, and George turns his glass of soda counter-clockwise. The lights keep flashing between purple and pink. They make Dream look even nicer. Sometimes George wishes he didn’t have thoughts.

“You’re not going to join them on getting wasted?” He asks when Dream gets a soda.

He shakes his head. His hair falls into his eyes. George almost moves to brush them away—because it annoys him. Clearly. “No,” he answers, “I don’t really drink. You?”

George shakes his own head, peering into his glass. All the ice has melted now, watering down the Coca Cola, and he isn’t even thirsty. “I’m not in the mood. I don’t want to wake up with a hangover tomorrow.”

“Understandable,” Dream nods. “I stopped drinking after I accidentally stole a stop light once.”

“How do you— accidentally?” George turns to properly look at him. “What the fuck? Where? When?”

Dream no doubt finds his surprise funny, if the snickers leaving his mouth as he speaks are anything to go by. “I don’t really remember how I did it, since I was, like, blackout drunk. But it was when I was in Florida, and in my junior year of high school. Same year as when I ran away from the cops.”

George pauses. “You *what*?”

This should be enough to support George’s claim that Dream is *definitely* some sort of high-priority criminal, especially with his eagerness to get all buddy-buddy with him, George, his *enemy*. It would only take a fool to ignore the obvious signs— Dream is a serial killer.

“Yeah,” he explains, “I skipped out on school too much, and I refused to go so they just. Came after me. Because it’s Florida.”

So maybe he isn’t a serial killer. This still did not defuse any of George’s suspicions.

This is why he spends the next hour or so talking to Dream— because he needs more intel. There is no other reason as to why he finds himself looking for more topics to talk about, or grinning at the stupid, not funny jokes that he makes, or that their knees keep bumping and George doesn’t absolutely hate it.

However, the passage of time exists, and it's some time past three a.m. when George decides now is an appropriate time to ask Bad to drive him home, because Sapnap and Quackity had decided to carpool all of them together. The club, shockingly, has emptied out since they began to talk, without George's notice.

Dream makes a considering noise. "Yeah, I should be heading home, too. It's getting late."

George nods, getting up from his chair as he takes a sweeping look around the room. He squints in confusion when he doesn't spot Bad, their designated driver and ride home, and pulls out his phone to call him. He stops at the sight of two text notifications.

Bad

*Hey Sapnap and I had to leave without you, I'm really sorry
Quackity broke his nose from trying to break dance
But I saw you chatting with Dream! Maybe ask him for a ride?*

"Oh my God," he says.

"What?" Dream asks, concern written on his face. "Did something happen?"

The other text notification had been from Sapnap, who, in a series of garbled typos, expressed something along the lines of "*saw you talking to dream yes gogy get LAID tonight*", followed by a series of smirking emotes. George considers pouring very harmful chemicals into Sapnap's coffee come Monday morning.

"I'm walking home," George sighs in resigned defeat. "Bad left without me."

"He— what? Like, just without saying anything?" Dream frowns. "What the hell?"

He shrugs, chewing on his bottom lip. "Quackity broke his nose, apparently. Probably took him to the E.R."

"Oh." A pause. "You don't have any other way to get home?"

George shrugs. "Not that I can think of, no."

Dream seems to be thinking, lips slightly pursed until he looks up from the floor and meets George's eyes. "I can give you a ride home," he offers.

George is quick to shake his head, refusing, "No, it's fine. You've already given me a ride before, and it's nearly four a.m."

"Exactly," Dream gives him a look, "it's almost four a.m. It'd be a terrible idea to walk home alone."

"I wouldn't be alone," George denies. "I'll have my thoughts and— great survival skills." He has never spent more than eight hours outside, and has no idea which way is North, but he could survive. Probably. At Dream's stare, he shakes his head again. "I'd rather not inconvenience you."

He furrowed his eyebrows. "You never inconvenience me." Which— is *not* something he should be saying to his sworn enemy.

"I," George's mind scrambles to find another valid reason, but the idea of walking home alone was getting more unappealing by the minute, and by Dream's expression, he knows this.

“Do you want a ride home?” He asks again, pulling out his keys.

In defeat, George accepts, “Please.”

He needs to stop taking rides home with his enemy.

The car ride itself isn’t unpleasant, mellow music trailing out of the radio while Dream drives him home, passing streetlights painting his features with sharper shadows. He looks entirely entrancing, and George forces himself to look away when Dream’s eyes flick over to him.

He doesn’t need to announce which house is his, Dream having remembered from the last time, which is a fact that sends his mind in an odd frenzy. It’s over four a.m. now, the moon hidden behind smoky clouds, and there are no stars in the sky. One of the many disappointments of living in the city.

When they roll into the driveway, he asks, out of politeness and *not* because he wants to spend more time with Dream, “Do you want to come in?”

The other man seems to mull over it, before, with a somewhat disappointed look, answering, “I shouldn’t. I really need to start heading home if I want to get any sleep before dawn.”

George stills. “How far away do you live?”

Dream admits, “Near Quinton Square.”

“You,” he begins, mouth falling open. “That’s nearly forty minutes away, what is *wrong* with you?”

“It’s not that bad!” Dream defends, crossing his arms and looking like a put-out toddler.

Why in the *world* he had decided to give George, someone who he is supposed to hate, a ride home when he lives more than half an hour away, *twice*, is something he cannot wrap his mind around. He decides that Dream is dumber than he thought. Murdering George is not worth driving back forty minutes.

“It’ll be nearly six a.m. when you get home,” he tells him, clicking his phone awake to check the time. He flinches at the brightness of it, and looks up at Dream, who is already staring at him, a small smile on his lips and eyes full of— something that George would rather not think about, for his own emotional stability.

“It’s fine, I don’t mind the drive back,” Dream says, but unfortunately for him, George begins to feel somewhat guilty, because if he thinks about it, this was kind of his fault. Apparently, Dream has mind-reading abilities, since he quickly reassures, “I would still give you a ride home if you lived, like, hours away. I really don’t mind, George.”

He tries to ignore the way his name sounds in Dream’s mouth, and instead glares at him. “You’re a dumbass.” Dream grins at that, teeth shining white in the light of a hidden moon, and he looks— not terrible.

“You still like me,” Dream says factually, and George doesn’t have the energy to tell him that *no*, actually, George hates him down the marrow of his bones. If he got run over by a semi truck, George would simply go back to his daily living.

“If you want,” George begins, and half his mind is panicking to shut *up* as he continues, “you can stay the night.”

Sometimes he wishes he had duct taped his mouth shut.

They both stare at each other, as George can’t believe what he had just offered, and neither can Dream, apparently, by his raised eyebrows and slightly open mouth. He clears his throat when he says, “It’s only a forty-minute drive, George, I don’t mind it.”

“Yeah, but I’m offering.” Out of the kindness of his own heart, because he’s a good person. In any other case, he would *not* be letting Dream, his sworn enemy, the man who is definitely out to inconvenience him at any given moment, to stay the night. Absolutely not.

Dream presses his lips together, contemplating, until he asks, “Are you sure?”

Here is his chance to back out of his stupid offer. All he has to do is shake his head, and say *no*, *actually, I lied, goodbye forever*.

George nods. “I’m sure.”

He’s an idiot.

A smile splits on Dream’s lips. “I’ll stay, then.”

Quite honestly, this is nowhere near what enemies are meant to do, and this is growing very apparent as he tosses Dream a fluffed pillow. He grins when it hits him in his stupid, attractive face.

“I’m sorry,” he says, not sorry at all.

Dream raises an eyebrow. “No, you’re not.”

“No, I’m not,” George agrees.

He had been immediate in suggesting his guest bedroom, which is directly across from his own room. The guest bedroom was rather a room dedicated to his cat, who’s stubborn and decided that, rather than sleeping on the one hundred and fifty dollar bed George had gotten him, he would rather sleep on George’s face at night.

It’s an alarming sight, seeing Dream in his home, in his hoodie that’s two sizes too large for him and seems to fit fine on Dream, and a pair of sweats that were actually Karl’s, for the times he’s slept over. It’s even worse that his hair is getting slightly messier, and that he looks *good*. God has it out for him, apparently.

His cat is not helping, hopping up and onto the bed, an aura of inclination as he walks over and settles into Dream’s lap.

“Hi,” Dream greets, and, scarily, George’s cat meows back. A hand rakes through his fur as Dream pets him, and George is quite sure he was going through the five stages of grief.

He tries not to die as he informs him, “If there’s nothing else, I’ll be heading to bed now.”

Dream looks up from the cat, eyes wide awake and looking more dismayed than someone with a cat in their lap should. “Oh. Okay.”

The clear disappointment in his voice is really doing more to George than it should, and some terrible part of him wants to fix it. It would be too much for him to spend an entire evening conversing with his enemy, taking a ride home from said enemy, later offering a stay over for the night, and then spending any more time than necessary.

He does not like the slight regret in his voice when he says, “Goodnight.”

Nor does he like the same, matched resignation when Dream responds, ““Night, George.”

It’s somewhat of a jump-scare when George is making French toast— or what is *meant* to be French toast— and he turns to see Dream standing in the middle of his kitchen.

“Good morning,” his voice is mildly higher than it should be as he dumps another piece of French toast onto his plate.

“Morning,” Dream smiles, looking wide awake when he looks at George with bright eyes. “You look nice.”

George still hadn’t changed out of his sleeping clothes— a simple pair of sweatpants and a shirt, both of which were in a size too large for him, as he had been too tired to properly get dressed so early in the morning. He had also forgotten that Dream, his sworn rival, was also in the house, and would be seeing him in his lazy attire.

Not that he *cares* if Dream thought he looked good. Because he doesn’t. He doesn’t care.

“Don’t make fun of me,” George scowls. “I’m making breakfast. I could poison your food.”

Dream moves over to the dinner table, where he pulls up a chair while he watches George. He can feel Dream’s stare as he goes through the motions of making French toast, self-conscious as he tugs on his shirt. “I definitely was not making fun of you. What’s for breakfast?”

“French toast,” George replies, only paying attention to the second part. “Grab the syrup, please. It’s in the fridge.”

He hears the chair squeak against the floor when Dream does so, and tries to ignore how domestic this feels.

Sometimes the line between enemy and something a little bit more than an acquaintance blurs, and George— doesn’t like thinking about it. He had established their rivalry long ago, and it was not going to break over a shared breakfast.

“Why do you own so much Nutella?” A voice much closer than George had expected suddenly says, right next to his ear when Dream places the syrup bottle next to his hand, and he jumps. A puff of breath hits his neck, a huff of laughter, and George tries not to flinch. If he turns, he would be only a few inches away, their faces unnaturally close, and he wonders if he should turn, just to see if—

George tries not to breathe a sigh of relief when Dream, miraculously, moves away, returning to his seat. “I’m going through a phase.”

“Of Nutella?”

“Don’t patronize me,” he says, and places two plates on the dinner table, along with two mugs full

of coffee.

“I’d never,” Dream smiles. It’s not attractive. It’s not.

George squints at him. “Eat your food.”

The other breaks into laughter while George shoves his mouth with food, hiding his smile around a full mouth.

The sun, shining and awake, seems to hit Dream in all the perfect angles, and birds chirp outside his open window cheerily. The kitchen is warm in spring’s presence, with both of them comfortable in the clothes they’d slept in, and eyes puffy with sleep.

The situation is— nice. Nicer than he wants to admit, and especially so with someone he is supposedly in hate with.

“Why do you keep looking at me,” George says, throwing a crumpled up napkin at Dream, who dodges it easily.

He shrugs, uncapping the syrup bottle. “You just look good.”

A flush creeps up and onto his cheeks when he forces a frown. “What is wrong with you,” he mumbles, hiding behind his mug when he takes a sip of his coffee.

It doesn’t seem to work, if Dream’s smug grin is anything to go by. “Are you blushing?”

“I’m going to kick you out of my house,” George warns, hoping his cheeks would stop feeling like they were on fire. He should *not* be reacting like this to a simple compliment. He’s been called attractive before, so why it was *Dream* of all people making him blush is beyond him.

“What, I don’t get to tell you how attractive you are?” Dream asks, placing his head on his palm as he leans forward. It feels like the pink on George’s cheeks is only fueling Dream’s growing confidence. He doesn’t like this. “I feel like you should know how pretty you are, George.”

“Okay, enough,” George huffs, ignoring the laughter from his right when Dream can’t help himself. “Why are you still in my home? Don’t you have things to do?”

He shrugs from across the table, swallowing before he answers, “Not really. I don’t like doing much on Saturdays.” He looks up from his plate after a pause, entirely serious when he asks, “Do you want me to go?”

Silence passes as George looks back at him, both of them unwilling to look away.

Reasonably, he should say yes, and immediately insist on his departure. After George’s persistence of them being enemies, it was cruel of the world to have him— *enjoy* Dream’s company like he does.

God. He enjoys Dream’s company.

George enjoys Dream’s company.

“You can stay,” he says, hopefully successfully masking the panic swelling in his stomach. He wasn’t meant to grow to *like* Dream.

Dream, who is insufferable in every way, with his easy charms and easy laughter, who insists on staying after work to perfect his work and makes sure to greet anyone he recognizes. Dream who,

unfortunately, kept insisting on getting lunch together, giving him rides even though he lives nearly an hour away, and sits across from him, grinning like he'd won the lottery when George told him he can stay.

Dream, who George is meant to *hate*.

Dream, who George, like an idiot, is accidentally starting to *like*.

George resists the urge to scream.

Any reasonable person, after such a predicament, would go to someone they trust to offer well-meaning and helpful advice, who would surely try to offer assistance while George tries to wrap his mind around the fact that he *likes* Dream more than he should.

George has never been reasonable, and instead goes to Sapnap.

"I think you're a dumbass," Sapnap tells him, watching as George shoves his face into the material of Sapnap's couch.

"Why did I come here," George groans, rolling over to face Sapnap, who sits across from him, looking entirely unamused. "You're no use."

Sapnap helplessly shrugs. "I mean, I suggested you could just get over yourself and make out with him first thing come Monday, but apparently you don't like good ideas."

"You're stupid." A pause, until he whines, "*I'm* stupid. I could've liked *anyone* else."

"I don't get what the big deal is." George raises his face from the sofa cushion. "Dream is clearly crushing hard on you, and you finally got your head out of your ass and realized you like him, so why don't you just," he gestures not very comprehensively with his hands, "make passionate love?"

"Make passionate love'? What is *wrong* with you," George huffs, and looks around for something to throw at him. "It's not that simple."

"How," Sapnap says dryly, eyes flat. "It's literally that easy. Nothing else has ever been so easy like this. Third grade math was more difficult than this."

George snorts. "Of course you'd think third grade math was difficult."

"I was trying to— you know what," Sapnap interrupts himself. "Suffer. You can suffer. I hope you and Dream end up wasting a whole year pining, and then when you both finally come to your senses and finally realize you both have liked each other the entire time, one of you gets promoted and has to move away to some other branch."

"Sapnap, that's completely unreasonable," George frowns. "He doesn't like me like that."

Sapnap takes a long look at George, and walks out of the room.

It's Monday morning, and George is desperately trying to hold it together as he prepares to face

Dream again.

He's never realized how much they interact, enemies or not, during work. It isn't unlike them to spend a good ten minutes, first thing in the morning, conversing while everyone else begins to get ready for the day. It was even worse now that Dream had situated them to spend lunch together, and that, if Urban Dictionary was any help, they were supposedly 'friends' now, in technical terms.

"Karl, you need to help me," George pleads, pulling the mentioned man closer by the arm. It's near eight forty-three a.m., Dream would be arriving any minute, and George would rather not face the other man right now.

Karl spares one look at him, a spoonful of ice cream halfway to his mouth, and raises his eyebrows. "You look *rough*, man."

"I *know*," George hisses, looking around, slightly paranoid. He wonders if he looks crazy. "I need you to help me avoid Dream."

His coworker makes a contemplating noise as he swallows a glob of ice cream. He'd ask why Karl is eating ice cream at eight a.m., but his friend's dietary consumption is the least of his worries right now. He'd leave that up to Tina.

"And why are we avoiding Dream," he asks around a mouthful of dairy.

"Because," he says, "I have made the dire mistake of having— emotions. And eyes. I'm a dumbass."

"You can say that again," Karl mutters, and George ignores the jab, because Dream has just entered the room.

Somehow, much to George's alarm, Dream has seemingly gotten even better looking since the last time he had seen him, which was less than forty-eight hours ago, so he couldn't reasonably have changed all that much, but George's brain isn't being all that *reasonable* at the moment. He isn't wearing anything of significance either, clad in the usual dress shirt and trousers, and yet. And yet.

Almost like he had been reading George's thoughts, Dream looks up from where he had walked over to his own desk, placing his coat on his chair and making eye contact with George. He offers a smile, boyishly charming with a small wave of his hand.

George's heart jumps to his throat, and he turns to Karl. "Quick, act like we are incredibly busy coworkers who have no time for stupidly attractive people."

Karl looks entirely offended. "I'll have you know that I am a contender for one of the most handsome faces of this office."

"I can vouch, pretty boy," Sapnap says, sliding to stand next to him. George makes a face at both his friends, trying his hardest to ignore Dream's presence, just a little bit away. "What're we talking about?"

"George's emotional boner," Karl supplies, shoveling ice cream into his mouth.

Sapnap groans. "Dude, you're still on this? I already said yesterday that you should just tell him. You guys could be jumping each other's bones in the storage supply closet right now and put us out of our misery."

“Who’s in misery?” Dream asks with impeccable timing, suddenly standing less than a few inches from George, who tries not to jump, and fails. Dream cracks a grin at him, and George tries to shoo away the weird moths infesting his stomach.

“Me,” George says wryly. “I’m in misery.”

An amused expression takes up Dream’s face, and Karl questions, “Why are you in Missouri? It’s almost as bad as Florida.”

George spares no exaggeration when he says, “The universe hates me.”

“Jesus,” Sapnap groans, “you’re overreacting. I don’t want to deal with this again, I had enough yesterday.”

And so Sapnap, being the terrible, terrible friend he is, leaves George alone with Dream, Karl trailing behind him as he continues to shove ice cream into his mouth.

Dream hums. “You think they’re gonna start making out in that empty conference room?”

George nods.

“Absolutely.”

They both glance at each other, or rather, George looks over to see Dream already staring, and fights off the weird feeling in his chest. A grin makes its way to Dream’s lips, and he can’t help but match it, exhaling a light laugh.

Silence passes as they both stand around George’s desk, until Dream pipes up, “I wanted to ask you something, actually.”

A coil of anxiety worms its way through George, and his thoughts immediately swarm to *he knows*.

This is ridiculous, of course, because there’s no way that Dream could possibly know how George feels. Really, in public appearance, they’re both still enemies. Who grab lunch together, and share rides home. And stay the night. And share breakfast. As enemies do.

“Go ahead,” he nods, gesturing for him to keep going.

“Right,” Dream chews on his lower lip, rubbing the back of his neck. “I was wondering if you’d like to— meet Patches? My cat,” he clarifies, as if George had forgotten their earlier conversations, as if George has not run through every line of dialogue passed between them late at night. Which George does not do. At all.

“Meet your cat,” he echoes, watching as Dream’s cheeks blossom pink.

“Patches,” he nods, “and maybe also have dinner? Together, preferably,” he suggests, eyes carefully watching George, who is currently going through what might be a stroke. He wonders if he’s gone crazy, or if this is another ruse to murder him. At this point, George would be okay with dying like this.

“Dinner,” George slowly repeats.

Dream nods. “As a formality, of course. The main event is you and Patches meeting, really.”

George’s brain briefly short circuits. Meeting Dream’s cat, having dinner, together, at *his* place,

where many things could happen.

The idea of dinner together with Dream should generally repel him, have him quickly reject the offer and never speak to each other ever again. Alarm should be running through George's head, worry about being murdered or any ulterior motives.

But Dream— looks entirely earnest, hopeful and fidgeting with his own hands and George kind of wants to hold one of them. The idea is enticing, and he vaguely wonders if Dream is a siren of sorts, always drawing him in so easily. If George has ever had any genuine worries about Dream, his enemy, going through such obstacles to result in George's doom, they are gone at the moment.

"That sounds," *horrible*, he should say, terrible, *unappealing*, any negative synonym in the book, yet his mouth has its own mind when he ends up saying, "really nice."

There is not a single molecule of regret in him when Dream smiles brightly.

Dream proposes dinner that night at eight, which gives him approximately three hours to prepare, both mentally and physically, for what's to come.

("At eight?" George raises an eyebrow. "That's pretty late.")

"Didn't you tell me you had dinner at two a.m. last week?" Dream questions, and George wills himself not to flush at the fact that Dream remembers their conversations over lunch. "And I was going to, you know, invite you during the weekend, but."

George stares at him. "But?"

"I really wanted to see you again," Dream confesses, and George barely restrains from melting into a disgusting puddle of insides.)

George should really start learning about the consequences of his actions.

He doesn't know why he's making such a fuss over his appearance, spending too much time on his outfit and the order he puts on his socks, but he supposes it was something to be dealt with, seeing as meeting a cat is quite the event.

Because, really, that is all George is coming over for— to simply meet the appraised Patches, and have dinner. As a formality.

"Who do you think you're fooling," Quackity's voice crackles through his phone's speakers, the volume turned up a little too high. George winces from where he has his head shoved into his closet.

"I am not *fooling* anyone," George protests, tugging out a tie, before glancing into the mirror. "It's the truth. Am I meant to wear a tie?"

"This isn't a fucking job interview," he groans, and George can hear his facepalm. "Have you ever gone on a date? You're going over to see Dream, your coworker, not the fucking— *Queen*."

"You could've just said no," George mumbles, tossing it away. "And it's not a date."

"You're a dumbass," Quackity retorts.

“This was a mistake.”

He runs a hand through his hair, wondering if it needs any styling. He forgoes using any sort of gel, never having liked the idea of the odd stiffness of his hair afterwards, and instead shakes the strands out of his eyes and rubs a hand against his cheek.

"Dream better not try anything," Quackity mentions. "I will not have a young man like him try to make any unsolicited advances towards *my* innocent flower."

George makes a face. *Innocent flower?* "He's older than you." He pauses. "*I'm* older than you."

Quackity keeps talking as George grabs his phone from where it sits on the bed, refusing to look back as he hunts down his car keys. "You always need to be prepared, George, there are some sketchy men out there. You can't trust any of them, even if they are good-looking, tall, attractive blondes with green eyes who know how to do their taxes."

George tugs on his shoes, tucking his phone into his pockets in the process. He pauses. "Do you *not* know how to do your taxes?"

"If he tries to make any moves on you," Quackity continues, ignoring the other man, "let me know, okay? I'll fuck him up." He makes light *pow, pow, pow* noises over the phone, and George can't help the slight grin on his face. "He won't know what hit him."

George double checks to make sure his door is locked when he exits his house. "I don't know, Quackity. Isn't he a foot taller than you?"

"That's not funny." George unlocks his car while Quackity keeps speaking. "That's not funny. No, that's fucked up."

The street is empty, save for the next door neighbors' kids who accidentally bounce a basketball into the road when George pulls out of his driveway, peering behind him. His fingers drum against the steering wheel, and there are all sorts of nerves wriggling their way under his ribcage and stomach, having some sort of party that he wasn't invited to. He feels a little offended.

"I'm kind of nervous," he confesses, swallowing down the sudden boulder in his throat. "What if it goes terribly? What if it's weird? We *work* together. I won't be able to look him in the eye anymore! I'm going to have to use the copy printer *downstairs*." Dream sits right next to the one on their floor. George should've thought this through.

Quackity takes a deep breath, one that blows into his microphone, and George shakes his head. "It's going to be fine. You're going to be there for his cat, right? You're going to become best pals with his cat, and then steal his food, maybe his cat too, and then go back home. You're just going to have dinner with a coworker." Quackity breathes into the mic even louder. "Well, you're more *friends* than anything, potential boyfriends at this point—"

"I am just there for his cat," George interrupts, not liking the weird, electricity-ridden feeling in his stomach at the thought of being *boyfriends* with Dream. With his enemy. "Just his cat." Maybe if he repeats it, it'll finally ring true.

"It'll go great," Quackity says, "it's gonna go great. If he tries to pull anything funny, give me a call. Unless you want him to pull something funny. *I* wouldn't mind if he tried to pull anything funny, but—"

"You are so annoying," George huffs, smiling despite himself when Quackity laughs.

In all seriousness, he's quite glad he had decided to call Quackity, who serves as a nice way to settle his nerves with easy and light conversation, enough ridiculousness that he nearly forgets why he was nervous at all. His jokes spiral into a territory of nonsense that even the odd festival being held in George's stomach finally takes a break.

It's beginning to rain when George slowly rolls to a stop in front of a house— a little too large, with a well-kept front lawn and his porchlight on. Just the sight of Dream's house is enough to send his heart flipping, the looming promise of the man being in the house as well, and he kind of wishes he hadn't hung up on Quackity a while ago.

He nearly leaves his phone behind when he slowly exits his car, taking an extra second to fix his hair, although it really needs no fixing, and George has no idea why he feels so much anticipation about going into his enemy's house. He doesn't know why he agreed to come at all, actually. It might not be too late to call in sick, even though he was slowly approaching Dream's front step.

Raindrops dot his face when he halfway jogs for cover on the porch, and surely the rain is the universe's way of telling him it's a bad idea. The movies always had rain when something bad was about to happen. Maybe George is an idiot main character who really needs to start paying attention and turn back home.

Unfortunately, George has always been stubborn, and instead rings the doorbell.

It's a little suspicious when it only takes less than a few seconds for the door to swing open, revealing Dream on the other side. His face is a little pink, eyes wide and bright when his gaze settles on George.

It's a moment of just the two of them staring at each other, and George involuntarily lets his eyes wander when he looks over the blond, his well-fitting t-shirt and jeans, and he hates how the shirt stretches over his shoulders, stretches over his chest, how he looks a little nervous, hands moving to shove themselves into his pockets.

His hair is as if it's been tugged on, falling over his left eye, and his expression is mildly flustered when he looks as though he can't seem to stop staring at George.

Dream, George realizes with a terrible feeling, looks good.

"Hello," he greets, feeling a little awkward when he shifts from one foot to the other, and Dream snaps out of it when he clears his throat.

"Hi," he returns, opening the door a little wider and moving aside to let George in. "Come in! Come in, you're— I wasn't— you look— you look good," Dream ends up stumbling with his words, and it's incredibly suspicious. He presses his lips together, seeming mildly embarrassed.

George does not like the whirlpool in his stomach. "Thanks." He would continue and say, *you do, too*, but the words feel a little too heavy on his tongue, and he decides against it, lest it be seen as giving up. Dream doesn't deserve the ego boost, anyway.

He leads them both to the living room, where George strips off his windbreaker and places it on the arm of the sofa, slightly damp from the showering rain outside. The living room itself is normal-looking, enough so that it almost dampens George's suspicions of being murdered tonight. Almost.

"Dinner isn't ready yet, I hope you don't mind," Dream mentions when they trail to the kitchen, the smell of basil and marinara sauce in the air. "I underestimated how difficult it was to make

pizza.”

George raises an eyebrow at the round shape of dough placed on the counter, smeared with marinara sauce and sprinkled with cheese. “You seem to have gotten the hang of it.”

“I’ve had to change my shirt three times,” Dream admits, rubbing the back of his neck. “I’m pretty sure there’s still flour in my hair.”

George takes a thorough look, from Dream’s hair to his shirt, and how the color white looks so good on him, how he looks good so easily. How he can’t stop staring. George has to force himself to look away.

He raises his eyes back to Dream’s face, and the other man’s cheeks are shaded a little dark, eyes glued to the counter. “I think you look fine.”

George decides he has made a mistake when a smug smile splits onto Dream’s lips.

“I think you’re fine too, George. *Exceptionally* fine,” he makes the effort of emphasizing, all his previous nerves seemingly gone, and he laughs when George groans.

“You’re so weird. No one says ‘exceptionally fine,’” George replies, shaking his head. He supposes he should have tried to seem more malicious as it only makes Dream laugh harder, eyes crinkling upward, and he can’t look away. “And that’s not what I meant.”

“Aw, George,” Dream grins, “you don’t think I look good?” He leans against the counter, tilting his head, and it infuriates George, the sureness of it all, the sudden confidence, because Dream *knows* what he’s doing.

George squints at him. “I don’t like you.”

“Well, I like you,” Dream responds easily, and George ignores how it has his heart pause for a second, “even if you don’t think I’m good looking.”

“That’s not what I— you’re irritating,” George huffs, defeat settling in as he crosses his arms around his chest. “You clearly know you’re good looking.”

Dream raises an eyebrow, slight smile on his lip. “Do I?”

“You do,” George affirms with a nod, “and you don’t need me to say it.”

He hums, shrugging as he sits up straight. George considers rallying against God when he notices how Dream practically looms over him. The world was so utterly unfair.

“I know,” Dream replies, walking over to the sink, “but it’s nice to hear it from you anyway.”

God, George had nearly forgotten how insufferable Dream was, if only for a moment. He fights the urge to turn around and drive back home immediately, calling Quackity at the same time. This is definitely considered funny business, and he’s pretty sure Quackity would throw hands for him if he asked.

He instead stays in his spot and watches Dream rinse his hands, before turning to face George again. “Is it okay if I finish up some things? I’ve just gotta chop up a few toppings, and then I’m all yours,” Dream reassures, and George ignores the last bit for his own sake.

“I don’t mind.” George chews on his lip. “Can I help?”

Dream frowns, eyebrows furrowing, before he answers, “You’re the guest, George, I’d rather you not—”

“I insist,” George persists. “I can help. And it would be boring, just sitting here.”

“I don’t think you with a knife is a good idea,” Dream begins, defeat in his voice.

George trudges over to the sink, rolling his sleeves up. “I am perfectly capable of using a knife correctly.”

“I’m sure,” Dream responds, although he sounds anything but. He is precise as he slowly slices his way through a bell pepper.

“I *am*,” George repeats. “I know how to cook some things.”

Dream raises an eyebrow. “Okay.”

“You of all people can’t be speaking,” George mentions, a scowl on his face, “don’t you water down your onions because they’re too spicy for you?”

“I told you that in *solidarity*,” Dream chokes out, slightly pink, “you weren’t meant to use that information against me like this. This is— this is *blackmailing*.”

“Oh, fancy words,” George taunts, pulling up a place across from Dream, where the other man hands him a cutting board and a mushroom.

Dream laughs, a little at disbelief. “You think blackmailing is a fancy word?”

“It could be,” George challenges, and can’t hold back a grin when Dream makes a show of facepalming, his smile still visible under his hand.

Miraculously, they manage to avoid murdering each other, which is quite the feat. Knives are handled responsibly, and both of them walk out of the kitchen unscathed forty minutes later, serving a warm pizza with respective preference in toppings on each side. The pizza is hoisted on the coffee table while they face the T.V., movie options visible on the screen.

George makes the mistake of taking a seat first, situating himself on the floor, and Dream follows by sitting less than a few inches away, where, if it were up to George, he would have placed a solid three meters between them.

Their knees, unfortunately, press together the entire time they try their best to pick a movie to watch, and George struggles to ignore the constant contact. He has no idea why Dream decided to sit so close— to poison his food, surely. No reasonable person needs to sit close enough to touch knees. George can smell his body wash.

“I’m thinking we could watch something scary,” Dream suggests, and it would be an innocent suggestion, if not for the slight smirk on his lips when he scrolls past *The Blair Witch Project*.

George raises an eyebrow. “Neither of us like horror movies.” He only remembers this because of how loudly Dream had complained during a movie night at Karl’s. No other reason.

Dream shrugs. “It’d be worth it to see you scared.”

George does not hesitate to send him a thorough glare, one that makes Dream laugh while he has

his pizza slice in his mouth, and he considers it a victory when Dream inhales a little too sharply and nearly chokes on cheese.

The showering rain from earlier has progressed to properly pouring in heavy, thick sheets, enough so that it hammers away at the roof and windows, barely muffled by the walls. Neither pay too much attention to it, scrolling through a list of movies.

After a short while, they both settle on *Beauty and the Beast*, which is the only movie both of them don't have protests against, and it is just as the movie begins that George actually accomplishes the sole purpose of his visit.

George stills when there is a warm body brushed against his side, barely turning in time to see a body of brown fur jump up onto the sofa, tail swishing in the air. Green eyes meet his, and he slowly blinks.

"Hello."

"Patches," Dream coos, delighted when he turns to look at her, and she bumps her head against his hand as he reaches out. "I was wondering where she was."

George watches with wary eyes as Dream pets Patches behind her ears, raking his fingers across her back. No enemy of his should be so loving toward their pets. This was horrible.

"George, meet Patches," Dream introduces, turning to him and retreating his hand. "She's an angel. Patches, meet George. He's a menace."

"I can hear you," George reminds him, but all attention is diverted to Patches when she nudges her nose against George's outstretched hand, giving it a proper sniff before settling back onto the couch. George tentatively scratches her head, relaxing when she doesn't seem to mind. "Oh."

"She likes you," Dream tells him, a small smile on his face as he watches them.

George gives him a look. "She just doesn't hate me."

"She likes you," Dream reiterates, grinning when he huffs in response.

George tries his best to focus on the movie, but it proves to be difficult when he's already watched it several times and how he can feel Dream's eyes looking over at him every few moments, enough so that he almost begins to wonder if there's anything on his face, or if he was just that more interesting than the movie. He's beginning to think Dream has a staring problem.

It's halfway through that Patches deems it time to get off the sofa, hopping down to the floor and instead pawing over to George's legs, where she places herself against his thigh. George slowly places a hand on her back, and begins petting when she doesn't move away.

"She clearly likes you, George," Dream mentions, leaning over to grab another slice of pizza, half of it done with. "You can't deny it."

"You're an idiot," George says maturely.

It's unwilling when he finds himself smiling, pressing his lips together as Dream tilts to the side with his laughter, threatening to topple over onto George. It wasn't even funny, the easy insult rolling off his tongue, but Dream laughs like it's his first time hearing a joke anyway.

"I'm the idiot?" Dream asks, unbelieving, and his smile is too wide for the situation. George tries

to look away.

He nods. "It's true. You're an idiot. And a nuisance. And all the other bad things. I hate you." George wishes he sounded more convincing.

"All the other bad things," Dream muses, wiping his hands off of pizza grease and leaning back, arms placed behind him. "I don't think you hate me."

"No," George shakes his head, "I do. I can't stand you."

"That's why we're having dinner together," Dream says reasonably.

George's heart seems to roll over, the implication that Dream *knows*, knows the guise of his own hatred, knows the horrible, fluttery feeling he gets, how his blood seems to be embroidered with lightning whenever the other is close. The idea that Dream knows everything sends his insides in a panic.

"Yes," George agrees calmly, placing his hands in his lap when Patches stands up and pads away. He carefully avoids looking at Dream, he can feel his stare on him, how heavy it lays on him, and he can't bear to just sit there, giving in and grabbing another slice of pizza, even if he isn't very hungry anymore right now.

There's a sudden roll of thunder, one he's thankful for when it makes Dream stop staring and note, "It's storming."

The beast slowly shines into a handsome prince, and George responds, "It is." There is a pause when he swallows the last of his pizza crust. "I should be heading back soon," he notes, a weird feeling in his stomach at the thought, and he wonders if it's food poisoning when he continues, "it'll be around midnight when I get home."

There's a flash of lightning, and Dream opens his mouth. George, for a second, is almost afraid he might offer to let him stay the night, because he's not sure if he could refuse, despite them having work tomorrow, despite the fact it'd be a terrible idea, despite the fact George shouldn't want to.

Thankfully, in some merciful manner, Dream does not offer to let him stay the night, and instead says, with more disappointment than he should allow, "Oh. Alright."

It's a few minutes of resigned silence as they watch the cheerful ending, the movie slowly coming to a close, and the second the credits start rolling is the moment George abruptly stands up from his seat on the floor, and Dream follows.

He watches as George shoves on his shoes, leaning over to pull the door open to reveal the thick curtain of rain, three feet of dry cement in front of the door. George steps out, squinting through the rain, and the blurry figure of his car is barely visible. He decidedly does not think about the drive home. Dream was unhinged to drive to and back from George's home. Further evidence of him being some sort of serial killer.

Thunder rolls, and curiosity gets the best of him as George reaches out from under the awning, the rainwater warm and trickling down from his fingers and down his wrist. He shakes off the wetness, and turns back to face Dream, who holds a black umbrella, stepping out onto the front porch.

"You won't take an umbrella?" Dream questions, eyebrows furrowed when he holds it out, unopened.

George shakes his head. "It's alright, I can just run to my car." He says it like he has ever

voluntarily ran in his life.

Dream frowns, before he offers, "I'll walk you to your car."

"That's not necessary," he begins, but it's a futile effort when Dream isn't listening, pulling the umbrella open and holding it over the both of them.

He steps closer, close enough for their shoes to brush, and if he wanted to, George could step closer, feel the warmth emitting from Dream in the chill of the summer night. But he doesn't want to. Obviously.

"You don't have to," George tries when he leads them down the steps, Dream close to his back, arms barely brushing as they walk together, and the pitter patter of the rain hitting the black material of the umbrella sounds nice when they cross the road. "I don't mind a little rain."

"I want to," Dream says instead of anything reasonable, and George's chest suddenly feels strange, something he ignores for his own sanity. He's beginning to wonder what was in the pizza. "I don't mind."

"You're strange," he replies in the place of a thank you, instead of anything actually nice, yet Dream's smiling when George faces him once they're at his car. There's barely enough room under the umbrella to put a respectable amount of space between them, but George tries to anyway, lest someone look over and get the wrong impression, as if he *likes* Dream or something.

Despite his attempts, they're still barely inches apart, and George is unable to look anywhere besides Dream. It feels like he's everywhere. He looks good in the moonlight. His eyes are shining.

"It was nice having you around, George," Dream says softly— too softly, considering they were enemies.

George keeps forgetting. His tongue feels heavy. "The pizza was good."

The corner of his lips quirk upward when he questions, "Was it?"

"It was," he nods. "I liked it." *I like you*, he thinks, and nearly holds back from bashing his head in. He wonders if having a brain really is that necessary. It wasn't worth having thoughts like these, and especially not in front of Dream.

Dream, oblivious to George's inner turmoil, grins. "I'm glad. I was a little nervous, actually, because I wasn't sure if I'd finish it in time," he says, and George likes how he talks, how his voice melts over his words so nicely and warmly, like these words are especially for George, even if all he's talking about is pizza making, of all things.

His stomach feels a little weird, and he wants to try and blame it on the pizza, but George knows it has nothing to do with Dream's cooking skills when all he can think about is how *close* Dream is, at the moment. He doesn't know if he could pay attention to anything else if he tried.

It's raining. He can't look away from Dream's mouth.

His lips are a little red and raw, him having chewed them so much while they were watching the movie. George needs to look away— they're *enemies*.

He can't look away. Dream is still talking.

“I’ve never actually made a pizza before, so I was really worried it wouldn’t end up right or I’d end up giving you, like, food poisoning and you’d hate me forever or something—”

In the rain, it feels a little unreal, like there’s only miles of rainwater surrounding them, and he uses it as a scapegoat when he steps forward a little, the both of them under a small umbrella in the pouring rain. Dream doesn’t notice, bringing up a hand to rub the back of his neck as he continues.

“The dough took, like, three tries to get right,” he chuckles, “but it was worth it, I think. I’m really glad you liked—”

George kisses him.

George kisses him, his hands coming up to grab Dream’s forearms, light in their grip when he gently tugs Dream forward and presses their mouths together, Dream mid-sentence and lips slightly stained with marinara sauce and the aftertaste of basil, and George’s feet threaten to step on Dream’s when they stand so close, and if he leaned closer, they’d be chest to chest.

George kisses him like a lunatic, an *idiot*, and it’s a realization that hits him when Dream stops talking, and it’s just the sound of gushing rain when George presses his mouth against Dream’s. His interrupted words are stuck between their lips when he stays there, and he nearly has a heart attack when Dream softly presses back.

It’s not even a proper kiss, just two grown men standing in the middle of the rain, lips against lips, and neither of them are moving, but it’s nice, it’s unfairly nice.

George nearly forgets who they are, for a moment.

There’s a strike of thunder, and it suddenly pushes George awake, it clicks when he remembers who he’s kissing, and he jerks away, stumbling back, far enough to hit the wet metal of his car door.

Dream looks dazed, goldfish eyes when he blinks several times, trying to snap back into reality. His eyes are unfocused.

“I don’t know why I did that,” George says, the words bubbling up from his chest. “I don’t know why I did that. I— don’t know why I did that.”

“You kissed me,” Dream states, a hand coming up to brush against his lips, and George’s stomach is getting acrobatic at the words. “You kissed me. *You kissed me —*”

“I don’t know why I did that,” George repeats, swallowing, before his hand scrambles to find the car door’s handle pressing against his back, other hand tightly gripping onto his car keys. “I don’t know why I—”

“George,” Dream says, warm, so warm, and George can’t deal with it at all.

He pulls the car door open, and Dream steps forward when George shoves himself into the driver’s seat. “I don’t know why I did that. I need to go home and— feed my cat. We have work tomorrow.”

“George,” Dream tries again, and he looks stricken, the dazed look gone and replaced with worry when he hurries, “George, it’s not— I didn’t— I don’t—”

I don’t like you like that, George connects the dots, and he starts up his car, embarrassment and everything bad flooding into his lungs.

“Sorry,” he says, out of everything, and then, “thank you for dinner.”

George shuts the door before he has to hear his name in Dream’s mouth again, how it sounds on his tongue, and the rain blankets the words outside the car when he rushes to drive off and away from his problems, leaving Dream in the middle of the road in the rearview mirror.

George refuses to look back.

His mind is a little vacant when he’s driving, and he should absolutely pay more attention to the road in front of him, in the concept of him accidentally crashing into someone, but he can’t bring himself to properly concentrate on where he’s headed, and, consequently, somehow ends up on Sapnap’s front door.

He knocks once, twice, and waits.

The door doesn’t open. He knocks again. And again.

George could be considered somewhat close to smashing the door down when it finally swings open, revealing Sapnap with a baseball bat in his hand, looking ready to swing.

“*What the fuck do* — oh.” Sapnap deflates, baseball bat clattering to the ground when he gets a proper look at the man on his front step. “It’s just you.”

George would bet he looks a little like a drowning cat standing on his *Welcome* mat, because Sapnap takes one look at him, before moving aside to let him in.

Sapnap himself looks like he had just come out of some sort of battle, hair sticking every which way and flushed cheeks, seeming a bit traumatized with his eyes wide open. He doesn’t blink as he watches George shuffle over to the couch, soggy and staining the couch with rainwater.

“George?” Sapnap raises his eyebrows when George stares at the fake cactus in front of him with the intensity of a thousand suns. “You good, man?”

“I’m fine,” George replies as he looks up and meets his gaze, wincing when his voice cracks. George is doing wonderful. Absolutely amazing. He is not, in fact, having a mental breakdown, contrary to popular belief. He is completely mentally stable. “Why do you ask?”

Sapnap gives him a look, and disappears into the hallway.

It’s definitely past midnight now. It’s a wonder that Sapnap was awake, until George realizes that he might have just woken him up, if his ruffled appearance is anything to go by. Even so, he was a little too worked up to feel too bad about it, and Sapnap wouldn’t mind too much, probably.

The rain is still pouring, bulleting against the windows, and it makes him think of Dream, how George had done— *that*, and simply left him in the middle of the road.

George presses his lips together, and tries to stop thinking about it.

He instead focuses on his clothing, shirt wet and sticking to his ribs and back and shoulders. It’s only beginning to bother him as Sapnap steps into the living room again, a bundle of dry clothes in his hands, and George is always grateful for Sapnap.

He turns around when George doesn’t bother going into the bathroom, stripping off his wet shirt

and exchanging it for a shirt that is dry and warm and not soaked through.

“Are you gonna tell me what’s wrong?” Sapnap asks, still turned around.

George shakes his head, forgetting that he couldn’t see it. “No.” He tugs on the shirt.

“What about tomorrow?”

George nearly trips as he pulls a leg through a pair of sweatpants. “Maybe.”

Sapnap hums, noncommittal. “Okay.” There’s a beat of silence. “Can I turn around now?”

It’s still raining the next morning, sky gray and dreary when George wakes up in Sapnap’s guest bedroom, a little cold from the window being left open. The weather is a blessing in disguise, however, when they find out that their building’s first few floors had flooded, leaving them with the day off. George has never been so grateful for poorly designed basements.

“This is great,” Sapnap declares, flopping onto the bed where George sits, a coffee mug full of apple juice in his hands. “Now you can tell me what the fuck was up last night.”

“I don’t want to talk about it,” George mumbles, frowning as he sips the last bit of his juice. He sets the mug on the nightstand. He ignores his phone. He’s pretty sure it’s dead. He almost wishes he were a phone. Maybe then he wouldn’t have kissed his enemy and run off right after.

Sapnap groans, throwing a stray pillow at George. It thumps against the space of the wall above George’s head, and lands in his lap. “Dude, come *on*. I can’t help you if I don’t know what your issue is.”

George doubts Sapnap would be able to help the situation much, because, for all the smarts he possesses, Sapnap is not the sharpest tool in the metaphorical shed. But, even so, George has never been able to keep things from him for too long, so he bluntly says, “I kissed him.”

It feels weird, saying it out loud like that, as if it was suddenly much more real than the moment it had happened, hours ago. The words feel odd in his mouth, clunky and unnatural, and he doesn’t even clarify who *him* is, but there was no need to. There is, really, no other person George would think of kissing, even if it’s his *enemy* of all people.

It’s a little funny, the way Sapnap seems to buffer for a solid seconds, before he clicks back into life and exclaims, “You *kissed him*?”

“I kissed him,” George groans, and falls over to shove his face into the pillow. “I *kissed* him, Sapnap. I’m a dumbass.”

Sapnap sounds too confused for his liking when he questions, “What’s the problem?”

George raises his head from the pillow, a withering glare on his face. “What do you *think*?”

Sapnap blinks.

“Is he a bad kisser?”

“Is he a bad— *no*, that’s not the— he isn’t— *no*,” George groans, and debates leaning over and smacking the other man. “The problem is that Dream doesn’t like me like that. I’m so *stupid*.”

There is a long beat of silence, in which Sapnap chews on his inner cheek and stares at the bedsheets in front of him, eyebrows furrowed in thought. George tugs on his hands as he waits, letting his head fall back against the headboard. Maybe, if he closes his eyes, he can pretend he doesn't exist for a little while.

The fantasy of nonexistence is forgotten, however, when Sapnap, very carefully, asks, "Did he *tell* you he isn't interested?"

George opens his mouth, pausing before he answers, "Well, not exactly, but—"

Sapnap lets out a loud noise of complaint, loud enough that he's sure his neighbors definitely heard, and he places his head in his hands. "Oh my God."

"I left before he said it," George defends. "I was embarrassed." He slouches against the headboard, half of his body limp. "I'm still embarrassed."

"You're right," Sapnap says, head still in his hands, words slightly muffled by his fingers. "You *are* an idiot. And not for kissing him."

"I knew it was coming!" George protests. "I just— didn't want to hear it."

"You also 'knew' that Dream was trying to murder you," Sapnap replies dryly. George doesn't like the way he places air-quotations around *knew*, because George did, in fact, know. It isn't his fault everyone else in the office was too blinded by Dream's charms to tell, even if it was *him* who ended up kissing Dream.

"That was also true," George does not help his case at all by stating.

Sapnap gives him a look. "So you just go around kissing every alleged murderer?"

"So what if I do," George huffs. "I don't even know why I did it. I don't even like him."

That was probably the most obvious lie he's told all morning, obvious enough and so thinly veiled that even Sapnap scoffs, "Yeah, right."

"Well, it's kind of true," he deflates, crossing his arms. "We were enemies until, like, three days ago."

"In what world were you two 'enemies'?" Sapnap snorts, unbelieving. He does the stupid air-quotes again, and George vaguely considers stealing his fingers so he'd stop. "You two flirt, like, all the time at work."

George frowns. "We do not."

"Yeah, you do," he nods. "You guys spend, like, ten minutes every day flirting at your desk. And staring at each other from across the room. And finding excuses to talk to each other all the time." At George's affronted look, Sapnap flatly says, "No one needs to print that many things in one hour, George."

"We— I've never," he begins, flushing under Sapnap's stare. "I was under the impression we hated each other."

He gives George an unamused look. "You're telling me you thought you two were getting lunch together every day as *enemies*?"

Well. When he puts it like *that*.

Sapnap looks like an odd mixture of disappointed and uncomprehending when he receives no reply. “Seriously? George. *George*.”

George rolls over, shoving into the pillow once again. This time, he refuses to come up for air.

“I’m an idiot,” he speaks into the fluff of the pillow. “I should not be allowed outside.”

“You say that like you ever go outside,” Sapnap mutters, trying to tug the pillow away from George. He grunts as he pulls harder, the pillow unmoving in George’s stone grip. “Just stop being an idiot.”

“I can’t show my face at work ever again,” George wails, the volume of it a soft sound in the pillow. “I’m going to quit. I’ll become homeless.”

“You’re being stupid,” Sapnap tells him with another pull. “Dude, have you been working out?”

“I’m a public embarrassment.”

Another tug. “George, this is not the most embarrassing thing you’ve done.”

George picks up his head from the pillow, loosening his hold, and Sapnap nearly falls off the bed when the pillow escapes George’s hands with no fight. “I’m moving to Brazil.”

“It’s not that big of a deal,” Sapnap rolls his eyes, scrambling to get half of his body back on the bed. “I always thought that your whole enemy shtick was just you being emotionally constipated.” He takes a second to think. “I guess I was right. Dream probably thought the same. If he didn’t think it was weird before, he definitely doesn’t care right now.”

“But I *kissed* him, Sapnap,” George reminds him, and he reaches for the pillow again, Sapnap hurrying to hold it away. “He probably thinks I’m weird, now.”

“Dude, no offense,” he starts, patting George’s arm, “but you’ve always been weird. Quirky, if you will. Dream is probably confused, if anything. You planted one on him and just left him in the rain.”

George cringes at the memory, and stretches to get a hold of the pillow. Sapnap leans away, close to falling off the side of the bed. “You don’t think he’s weirded out?”

Sapnap furrows his eyebrows. “Not for the reason you think. Why would he be? He’s had a crush on you for, like, *forever*.”

George reaches out a little too far, the bedsheets slipping underneath him, and his body topples onto Sapnap, landing on top of the other man with a rough *oof*.

“*What?*”

“It was so obvious,” Sapnap chokes out from under him, trying his best to push his friend off and prevent himself from getting suffocated. “He does gymnastics to try and find a reason to talk to you. He knows a bunch of shit about you, too. It’s kind of creepy, actually.”

George pushes himself to sit up, glaring. “You said Dream wouldn’t remember my favorite donut flavor.”

“Yeah, ‘cause it was a *year* ago, I didn’t think he was *that* obsessed!” Sapnap rolls his eyes,

yelping when George punches his shoulder. “This is so toxic.”

“Suffer,” George replies, crawling to sit a few inches away. “Why didn’t you tell me? You just let me make a fool out of myself!”

“I thought you knew,” Sapnap defends, holding the pillow close to his chest, cradling it like a baby.

“How would I have known?” George scowls as he flops against the bed once more. “I was convinced we were enemies.”

Sapnap gives him a look. “You guys went out together for lunch constantly. He gave you rides home, even though he lives nearly an hour away. You let him stay over. He remembered your favorite donut flavor from a year ago. It was *so* obvious, George. I just didn’t realize how big of a dumbass you are.”

“Why do you insist on kicking a man while he’s down,” George recites, staring up at the ceiling.

“Why do you insist on being a fucking idiot,” Sapnap retorts, and lies down next to him. There’s a pause, before he asks, “So, what’re you going to do?”

George considers. Really, he feels like his world has been flipped over, the floor pulled out from right under his feet.

The news of them not being enemies at all was jarring enough. The idea of Dream having had a crush on him the entire time was a whole other whiplash. He doesn’t know if he’s meant to be feeling so warm about it, like his heart was being swallowed right up, ribcage flooding with some sort of elixir while he keeps thinking about the concept of Dream actually *liking* him.

It kind of makes sense, with how Sapnap had relayed it to him. Dream had, of course, bent backwards to give George rides home, eating sushi that he didn’t like for him, remembering his favorite foods, complimenting him and staring at him for a little bit too long.

All of it makes him feel weird inside, like George had just swallowed the sun whole in one bite, like he’d just breathed in a balloon full of helium, like he was on the first dip of a rollercoaster. With the sudden pressure of being *enemies* off his chest, George allows himself to actually consider the idea of being infatuated with Dream.

It’s more of a reality than an idea, at this point. He finds himself wanting to be around Dream so often, and his feelings were already obvious enough when he leaned in and kissed Dream so suddenly.

With the concept of him liking Dream, of Dream liking *him* back, giving his heart away didn’t seem so bad.

“George?”

He feels a poke at his cheek, and George turns to his right, where Sapnap’s is already staring at him, brown eyes peering deep into his soul. George raises his hand, and pokes back. “What do you want?”

“What’re you gonna do,” Sapnap asks again, unperturbed by George’s demeanor.

George lets out a sigh, facing the ceiling once again. “I don’t know.”

Sapnap mimics his sigh, before letting it fade into a hum. “Well, you’ve got the day off today.”

“So?”

“So,” he continues, sounding unimpressed, “now’s a great time to go see him and talk.”

“Terrible idea,” George says immediately, pushing against the bed to sit up. “I’m going home and taking a nap.”

“You just woke up,” Sapnap points out, also rising into a sitting position as he watches George scoot off the bed. “There’s never been a better time to go and confess. He’s definitely home right now, too. No reasonable person is out and about at,” he squints as he leans over and checks his phone, “one p.m. on a Tuesday.”

“Dream is not a reasonable person,” George refutes, and steps out of the room. “I’m going home. I am not facing Dream right now.”

George stays true to half his words when he heads home.

It’s stopped pouring, but it’s still drizzling, lightly showering, and the sun is slightly peaking through gray clouds. His shirt is sprinkled with raindrops, hair curling in moisture, and half of him wonders why he didn’t bring an umbrella as he closes his car door.

He pauses in the middle of his journey from his driveway to his home, however, when he realizes there’s a man on his front porch.

The world is out to get him, apparently, as there stands, out of the eight billion people that exist, *Dream*, holding a jacket in one hand and a slightly nervous expression when he turns and spots George standing five feet away from him.

George considers turning around and getting back into his car, maybe even moving back in with Sapnap. Maybe moving to Brazil wasn’t such a bad idea.

He, instead, opens his mouth to greet, “Hello.”

“Hi,” Dream awkwardly responds, hand rubbing the back of his neck. “Fancy seeing you here.”

George stares. “I live here.”

Dream clears his throat.

“I know.”

Despite the fact that, to some degree, this is a little bit creepy, George is more lost than anything else, more distracted by how Dream’s wet hair sticks to his forehead, how the color green looks good on him, how he doesn’t have an umbrella, for some strange reason.

“Are you going to tell me what you’re doing here?” George suggests, raising an eyebrow. He has to look up a little, Dream’s height heightened by being up a few steps on the level of his front porch.

Dream gestures to the windbreaker in his hand. “You— left your jacket at my house last night, and I wasn’t sure if it’d be weird of me to bring it to you tomorrow during work, so I just— thought to bring it to you,” he explains, tugging at the hem of his hoodie.

George looks at the windbreaker, and then back. "I wasn't home."

Dream looks back at the door behind him. "I was kind of hoping you would be."

George feels a weird tidal wave in his stomach. "What for?"

"Well," he begins, "I wanted to talk to you. About yesterday."

"Yesterday," he repeats. George wishes the Earth would just split in two for a second and perhaps send him to the core of the world.

"Yeah," Dream nods. "You— you kissed me."

George decides to use his last resort. "I have no idea what you're talking about." Maybe, if he pretends hard enough, the kiss will never have happened. Contrary to his hopes earlier, he was feeling a little bit embarrassed.

Dream raises his eyebrows. "Really?"

"Really," George insists, nodding for extra measure. "In fact, I have no idea who you are."

Dream takes a long, long look at him, eyes bright as they stare at George. Despite George's ridiculousness, the other man seems unbothered, unmoved when Dream regards him.

After a beat of silence, he walks down the steps of George's front porch, letting himself get a little showered in the drizzling, half-hearted rain as he approaches George close, close enough that they are barely a foot apart.

"Did you get amnesia on the ride home?" Dream questions, tilting his head.

"Yes," George answers, swallowing down his nerves. "I got into a terrible car crash. My car exploded. I need to get a new one."

Dream's eyes flick over to George's unscathed car, sitting in the driveway. "Really?"

George refuses to let his serious façade break. "Really."

"How do you plan on getting to work and back?" Dream asks, going along with the charade for some strange, odd reason. Maybe George's plan is working. Maybe manifestation really does work.

George doesn't think about the fact Dream had seen him drive here. "I can take the bus. Or walk."

Dream carefully considers him, chewing on his lower lip, and George makes full effort to not look at his mouth. "Well," he says, handing over the windbreaker as he speaks, "if you ever need a ride, just give me a call."

"Okay," George responds. He looks down at the windbreaker, the dry fabric slowly moistening. His own shirt is speckled with raindrops, not yet properly wet. "Thanks."

"Anytime," Dream smiles.

The windbreaker feels heavy in his hands, and George doesn't really know what to say. The silence feels heavy with words, but neither have said anything, and Dream shifts from his right side to his left.

Dream stands there, seemingly frozen in place for a moment, as though he isn't quite sure what to do with himself. He pockets his hands in his hoodie and steps to the side.

"Um, do—"

"I'm sorry for kissing you," George blurts.

It's immediate, the embarrassment that hits him. An invisible sheet of lead drapes over him, holding George in place as mortification drowns his stomach and lungs. His earlier strategy of avoidance had worked somewhat, but the apology had slipped out of his mouth before he could even dare to think about it, an unwelcome burst of vulnerability.

Now he has to deal with the aftermath, of the unwavering, awkward silence that follows, and they're on stilts as they stare at each other. Dream's eyebrows are furrowed, a crease near the corner of his mouth when he frowns. He looks troubled—one of the many reactions George had dreaded.

A stray raindrop hits his cheek when Dream says, "I'm not."

The implication of his words barely register when George flounders. "You're not what?" He asks, just to be sure, just to make sure he wasn't seeing things that weren't there. Dream looks too calm for it to mean what George thinks it does.

The raindrop slowly traces Dream's jaw. "I'm not sorry that you kissed me," he shrugs, and he's unnaturally nonchalant, George decides. His hands remain pocketed, and he leans back a little, as if to give George space. George resists the urge to lean in.

His hands fumble when he nearly drops his windbreaker, having forgotten that he had other body parts other than his mouth and eyes when he looks away from Dream, if only for a millisecond. He can't afford to look away now, just in case Dream disappears the second he looks away.

"I don't understand," George plainly says, and it's because he doesn't.

"I'm not sorry you kissed me," Dream repeats, a little more firmly, and he says it so easily, like it's the easiest thing he's ever said. George resents it, how easy it seems to come to him. "I want you to do it again, actually. As much as you want."

"I," George begins, gripping his windbreaker a little tighter, fingers pressing painfully against the fabric. "I don't know what you mean."

Dream won't stop staring at him, his gaze too warm and overbearing for him to handle. He doesn't waver when he states, "I wanted you to kiss me." He pauses, chewing on his lip, before adding, "I still do."

"You," George begins, words falling short when Dream gives him a tilted smile, unfairly attractive. "You wanted me to kiss you."

"I still do," Dream corrects.

"You still do," George echoes, a little dazed. He keeps staring, because he's quite sure that if he opens his mouth, he'd do something embarrassing, like spill out a love confession. How humiliating it would be, to confess his love to his enemy, in the *rain* of all places.

George vaguely wishes they were inside, then his hair wouldn't be running damp, and he's quite sure he looks a little soggy, a pathetic comparison to how strangely good Dream looks in the rain,

like Poseidon had granted him glamour in rainwater.

He's pretty sure he's going through one of the stages of grief when he keeps staring at Dream, won't stop staring. "You want to kiss me."

"I do," Dream nods, a slight smile as he says so, like he finds something funny.

George's fingers twitch at the sight. "I don't know what to say."

"Well," Dream explains, and his hands are out of his pockets, visibly fiddling with his own fingers as he speaks, "now you usually let me know whether or not you like me back or not."

George's eyebrows furrow. "I kissed you first. I thought you'd figure it out by now."

Dream looks sheepish when he raises a hand to rub against the back of his neck, tilting his head. "To be honest, I wasn't really sure if you liked me at all before yesterday."

"I don't," George answers instinctually, before grimacing. "I didn't— I didn't mean that."

"Okay," Dream simply responds, and George takes it as a chance to explain.

"I wasn't— I don't hate you. I've never not-liked you," he elaborates, which doesn't seem to clear up much confusion as he continues. "I thought I hated you, at first, but I'm just— I was under the impression we were enemies," he admits, and winces as Dream raises his eyebrows.

"Enemies," he reiterates, and George groans.

"I don't— I had to find out from Sapnap that we were supposedly flirting for the past few months," George confesses, and the embarrassment is too much to bear when he raises his hands and hides his face behind his palms.

Dream, however, doesn't seem angry with his obliviousness, if the bubbling laughter is anything to go by. It's a little loud in the quiet street, bright in the dreary rain, too warm for their wet apparel.

"George," he chokes out from his laughter, cheeks a little pink as he clutches his stomach. "George, you—"

"I *know*, alright," George whines from behind his hands, refusing to look at the other man. Despite his humiliation, he can't help the small smile creeping up on his lips at the ridiculousness of the situation, how in the world they had ended up *here* of all places.

"*George*," Dream laughs, somewhat calmer than before, and he's still giggling as he says, "George, you're such an idiot."

"I know, okay, you don't have to tell me," he mutters, and he's glad Dream can't see his face at the moment, his cheeks burning and no doubt red with embarrassment. "I didn't know you liked me."

"I was flirting with you the entire time," Dream says, and George doesn't have to see him to hear the grin in his voice, the apparent smile in his words when he claims, "I'm pretty sure our entire office knows, George. I thought I was so obvious."

"You weren't obvious enough," George groans, and keeps his face behind his hands as he feels warm fingers wrap themselves around his wrists.

Dream gently tugs at his hands, palms warm against his skin as he asks, "George, it's okay."

“Clearly not, when you were laughing at me,” George points out. He presses his lips together when his hands begin to loosen, and it’s barely a fight when Dream pulls at his wrists and tugs them away from his face. He grins at the sight of George. George can feel his flushed face get even worse.

“I wasn’t laughing at you,” Dream shakes his head, and he’s leaning in now, he must be, he wasn’t this close a few moments ago. George can’t find it in him to mind their close proximity in any way, only the slight smugness in Dream’s smile, like he finds pride in George’s embarrassment. George is reminded why he had created their rivalry.

George presses on a frown. “What were you laughing at, then?” He scowls, and tries to pull his wrists out of Dream’s hold, a useless effort.

Dream shrugs again, using his hold to pull George a little closer, and they’re both properly wet now, raindrops clinging to their eyelashes as they look at each other. Dream is warm nonetheless, warm rain and warm skin where they meet in touch.

They’re barely inches apart when Dream softly, quietly, says, “You’re a little ridiculous, you know that?”

George squints. "I don't know what you mean."

“I think you do,” Dream mumbles, and their lips barely brush when he leans even closer, until their chests nearly press against each other. “But it’s okay. I like it.”

"I am going to kill you," George prophesied, heart stuttering when Dream lets go of his wrist to raise a hand to his neck, fingers light where they hover. “I am going to kill you and then I am going to prison.”

“You wouldn’t lay a finger on me,” Dream answers, his hand settling against the nape of George’s neck, “you like me too much.”

“I don’t,” George protests, fully equipped with evidence, but all of this falls away when Dream kisses him.

It’s much more different than their first one, tasting like rainwater, raindrops pressed between their lips as they kiss. The shock of it wears away quickly, and George lets Dream push against him eagerly, like he’s making up for what he didn’t do the first time.

George lets his free hand wander, grip firm when he holds the side of Dream, pressing through his shirt and fingers pressing into his ribcage, just to make sure Dream is here, real and solid and kissing him like he’d been thinking about it for so long. Dream’s hand brushes against George’s hair, slightly tugging as he takes George’s breath away.

George settles in pulling Dream closer, close enough for their legs to bump together when he steps between Dream’s, angling his head upward, and he wonders a little if his stubble bothers Dream, how their jaws brush against each others, and he almost asks before he remembers his mouth is a little occupied.

Dream has the perfect timing when he breaks away yet lingering near, inhaling like a fish out of water, and he almost looks like it, goldfish eyes, and his mouth slightly agape. George wants to kiss him again.

“I still don’t like you,” George says instead, because he likes being difficult. It’s not attractive when Dream huffs a laugh, and he’s still a breath away.

“I’m so sure,” he replies, and George has no time to prepare when he swoops in and presses a kiss against the corner of his lips, overly sweet when he leans away. “Come on, it’s raining. Aren’t you going to invite me inside? Do you want me to catch a cold?”

“You’d deserve it,” George mutters, rolling his eyes at Dream’s laughter. The rain has significantly picked up, close to mimicking the storming of yesterday as it pours. They’re already soaked to the bone, and George hurries up the steps, finding cover under his awning.

He digs around for his keys, and they’re wet when he pulls them out of his pocket. He cringes at the sight of his previously-dry windbreaker’s damp fabric, but pays it no mind when he notices his equally wet clothes. He steps inside, shoving off his shoes, and turns around when Dream is still out on the porch.

“Aren’t you coming inside?” George questions, eyebrows furrowed, and Dream shrugs.

“Not until you admit you like me,” he answers, and George barely refrains from smashing his head in.

“You’re joking,” he replies dryly, but he knows he isn’t when Dream gives him another shrug.

“I spilled my heart out to you, and you didn’t even tell me you like me,” Dream mentions, and George doesn’t like how he has a point, even if he’s an idiot. He brings up a hand to his heart, overdramatic as he sniffs, “George, just tell me you hate me. Do you even like me?”

“You,” George begins, heart thrumming with life and love and everything in between, “are an idiot. You know I do.”

“Do I?” Dream raises an eyebrow, and George presses his lips together, before nodding.

“You do. You know I like you,” he forces out, and it feels strange, the words on his tongue— he’s never been one for verbal confessions, and especially not to his supposed-enemy, but the words are the truth, no matter how difficult they are to get out.

The struggle is worth it, however, for how Dream brightens, enough to clear away the gray clouds when he hurries inside, soaking wet and warm, so warm when he wraps an arm around George. He presses his nose against his cheek, lips pressing against George’s skin.

“You’re right,” Dream mumbles into George’s cheek, “I do know.”

George hums, his chest stuttering at the feeling. They stand together by the front door, dripping wet in rain water, but there’s not much to care about when they’re warm and together.

It’s peaceful, for a few moments, until George opens his mouth again.

“We’re still enemies, though.”

End Notes

the fantastic ari ethmaron has made [spectacular art](#) of this fic !!! go give them a like !!!!
des my beloved has also made [amazing art](#) of this !!!! go give them all the love :]
cycy has also made such a [sweet doodle](#) of these two :D please check it out !!!!

hello !!! i was tempted to write more enemies-to-lovers, so here we are :D
i started this all the way back in march, a little while after i finished "van gogh out with
me", so it's taken . a while to finish :) i hope everyone liked this, even if it was a little long
for a one-shot !!!
as always, feel free to comment, kudos, and u can see me [here](#) or [here!](#)
thank u so much for reading !

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!